

MILITARY AND NAVAL MEDICAL SERVICES.

ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.

SIR,—We, the medical officers of the army, ought all to be grateful to Sir William Muir and Surgeon-General Munro for the honest and straightforward manner in which they have advocated our cause and upheld our interest with the authorities. As thoroughly practical men who had served in every part of the world, and in every grade from the lowest to the highest, they knew what was wanted; and, in spite of the opposition that they have met with from interested and one-sided motives, or from personal animosity, they have fearlessly done their duty to the department and to the public.

"X," in your issue of the 12th October, objects to the mode of entry to the department proposed by the War Office Committee. If he be an officer of the department, he must know that the competitive system alone has introduced men into its ranks who are utterly unfit for their position—men who would never have been admitted under a system of nomination. That some first-class men and a considerable number of others of fair abilities have entered I do not seek to deny; but I can at the same time fearlessly assert that a considerable number of very inferior men have gained admission to our ranks—men who query every order they receive, and even after ten or twelve years' service have not yet learned that the first duty of a soldier is obedience. I consider that giving the nomination of half of the appointments in the service to the universities is a judicious step. The professors and teachers will have four years' personal knowledge of the men they recommend; and these gentlemen, for their own credit, will bring forward only men who they think will do them credit. The improvement of pension proposed by the Committee is, I consider, a judicious recommendation. Although pay and allowances have been increased from time to time, they never were asked for: the demand by the department has always been for a more liberal provision for old age.

"A. M. D." in the same issue objects to "appointing a new grade by selection." No doubt those passed over, or those who know they will be passed over, will object to this, and prefer a purely seniority promotion; but the good of the service, as well as justice to the department, demands that no man should be appointed to administrative rank who does not possess the qualifications of a good administrator. Many men who have been able regimental surgeons, and have otherwise borne a high character as officers and gentlemen, have utterly failed as administrators, and their deficiencies have in many stations been visited on their juniors, for they have failed to take that position which, as the local head of their department, it was their right and privilege to do, and the general status of their juniors has suffered in proportion.

The rank of brigade-surgeon may be looked upon as a probationary appointment, to find out whether an officer is fit for promotion to administrative rank. Though promotion to this rank will nominally be made by the Director-General, it must be recollected that he is controlled in his selection by His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief and by the Secretary of State for War, who will not permit any man to be passed over without sufficient cause. We are all of us apt to think well of ourselves, and consider ourselves fit for administrative functions; and some of our number assert that "any man who can do the duty of a regimental or executive surgeon is fit to hold the higher rank and perform the duties of a deputy surgeon-general." With those who hold such an opinion I entirely differ. No man should be promoted to administrative rank who is not a good judge of character, or who does not possess tact in the management of officers and men, or who has not a cool judgment and a good temper. However well qualified in other respects he may be, a man who fails in these essentials to command, or who himself is not subordinate to his superiors, is utterly unfit for promotion to administrative rank; and however hard it may be for him to be passed over, justice to those who would serve under him, as well as to those under whom he has to serve, demands it.

The reference to the treatment of a senior surgeon-major lately returned from India scarcely deserves notice; but I can only say that if it be the same individual as I imagine, he has not been, in my opinion, treated with injustice. To suit his own convenience he chose to serve at home; and when his turn came for promotion, it was found that he was disqualified from not having sufficient Indian service. He applied to go out to India to qualify, and consequently was granted a tour of Indian duty. This tour he never completed, but came home after having "put in" the few months required to make up the deficiency in Indian service, on account of which he was passed over. Besides which, letters appeared in some of the papers bearing his signature, which those most prejudiced in his favour could not call subordinate. In spite of these letters, had he continued on his station and completed his tour of Indian duty, his claims to promotion, I have no doubt, would have received consideration; but what can a man expect who seeks to make the service a personal convenience to himself?

"The military Member" says that the department is undermined. I do not think it is. I have served in all parts of the world, and, except during an epidemic of cholera, I never saw a medical officer with so much to do as an ordinary civilian in good general practice would consider a fair day's work.

The ten years' system, which has proved a failure, was neither proposed nor approved of by Sir William Muir. He gave it a trial. He is now entitled to have the proposal of the War Office Committee, which it is presumed is approved of by him, placed on trial; and I have no doubt that if it be, it will prove a success, and attract to our ranks first-class candidates, who will take their social stand on their own character and conduct, and not on being hangers-on to a regiment.—I am, etc.,

JUSTICE.

TESTIMONIAL TO MR. CANTON.—The annual *conversazione* of the Medical Society was held in the Board Room of the Charing Cross Hospital, on Friday, October 25th. After an introductory address from Mr. Green on the objects of the Society, Mr. Cantlie, in the name of the old students of the Hospital, presented Mr. Canton with a testimonial. Mr. Canton has been connected with the Hospital, as student and teacher, for a period of forty years; and, on his being placed on the consulting staff, his pupils thought a fitting opportunity had occurred to show their appreciation of his teaching and his qualities as a surgeon. Many of his old pupils were present, including Sir Joseph Fayrer. The testimonial took the form of a handsome salver and a substantial accompaniment.

OBITUARY.

WILLIAM WITTMAN THOMPSON, M.R.C.S., ETC.,
OF BOGNOR.

THIS highly esteemed member of the profession came of a medical family. His father was Mr. W. Thompson, an old medical practitioner at Bognor; whilst his grandfather was Surgeon-General Thompson, who was present at the battle of Waterloo. The subject of our notice was forty-three years of age at the time of his death, which occurred on October 27th. He studied at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, where he was a pupil of Mr. Holmes Coote; and he became qualified in 1856 by taking the membership of the Royal College of Surgeons and the licentiatehip of the Society of Apothecaries. He then became House-Surgeon to the Lambeth General Lying-in Hospital, and subsequently served in the Mediterranean on H.M.S. *Renown* from 1857 to 1860, when he joined his father in practice at Bognor. He married in 1867. He was Admiralty Surgeon and Agent to the Coast-Guard at Bognor, and Surgeon to the Merchant Taylors' Convalescent Home in that town.

His kindness to the poor of Bognor was so marked that they acutely felt his loss, and on the day of the funeral the inhabitants of Bognor generally testified their admiration for the straightforward honest manliness of the deceased in a most unequivocal manner. The body was buried at Bersted (near Bognor), on Thursday, the 31st ult.; and on that day every shop in Bognor was closed, and the tradesmen and other inhabitants of the town were present at the funeral in such large numbers that the church was more than filled. Rarely, or never, has a death in Bognor called forth such a spontaneous show of feeling on the part of the residents. The cause of Mr. Thompson's death was cancer of the right tonsil, for which he had been treated by Mr. Durham and Sir James Paget when the disease first manifested itself at Christmas last.

We regret to learn that Mr. Thompson, who for many months past had been compelled by his illness to retire altogether from practice, had been unable to make sufficient provision for his widow and seven young children. His second child, Percy H. W. Thompson, aged 9, is a candidate for election to the Medical College at Epsom in May next; and his case, without the strong recommendation of the well-known names with which it is backed, will doubtless be well supported, in consideration of the sterling worth of his dead father.

EDWARD DENIS DE VITRE, M.D. EDIN., M.R.C.P. LOND.

DR. DE VITRE, who died at Lancaster on October 4th, was a man of mark in his generation. He will, perhaps, be best known to fame as the chief promoter—if not the actual founder—of the Royal Albert Asylum for Idiots and Imbeciles of the Northern Counties; but he was emphatically a "many-sided" man, and there was scarcely any local enterprise of public importance in which he did not take a prominent share. Clear in his views, and perspicuous in the expression of them, and possessed of a considerable degree of eloquence, he was an excellent advocate of a good cause; and his philanthropy always made him ready to come forward when his services were likely to be of benefit.

Born in 1806, near Carlisle, he proceeded to qualify himself for the medical profession by pupilage with Dr. Thomas Elliot of that city, and subsequent study at the University of Edinburgh, where he graduated M.D. in 1827. He came to Lancaster in 1832, taking up the practice of a physician there. He soon obtained considerable repute both professionally and as a public man; and he was called into consultation through a wide area of North Lancashire and the neighbouring counties. In 1840, he was appointed Visiting Physician to the Lancaster County Lunatic Asylum; and in this capacity he became much interested in the treatment of the insane, publishing *Observations upon the Necessity of an Extended Legislative Protection to Persons of Unsound Mind*. Mr. Gaskell, afterwards Commissioner in Lunacy, was at this time Superintendent, and, in conjunction with him, vast improvements were made in the methods on which the asylum had previously been conducted. Instruments of restraint were as far as possible disused; and the more humane *régime* which was found successful here formed a standard for imitation in other similar establishments. It was also at this period that Mr. Gaskell organised, so far as the means at his command allowed, special arrangements for the care of his juvenile idiot patients; and this germ, no doubt, bore fruit at a subsequent period in Dr. De Vitre's benevolent mind, when he threw himself with much zeal into the project for the establishment of the Royal Albert Asylum. To Mr. James Brunton, a member of the Society of Friends, resident at Lancaster, is due the first suggestion of

a local institution for idiots. He was ready to back up his suggestion with the handsome sum of £2,000; and he applied to Dr. De Vitre, amongst others, for advice as to how he might most serviceably expend that sum. With the support of numerous benevolent friends in the different counties, Dr. De Vitre was led to form a comprehensive project for a large institution for the idiots and imbeciles of the north of England on the model of Earlswood. At the meeting in December 1864, at which this scheme was broached, Dr. De Vitre rather alarmed some of his audience, and even his friend Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth, who presided, by the boldness with which he spoke of £100,000 as necessary for its complete realisation. It is gratifying to add that the whole of this large sum was forthcoming during his lifetime; and a noble building, surrounded by an estate of over eighty acres, stands unencumbered as a monument to Dr. De Vitre's confidence in the practical benevolence of the Northern Counties. As Chairman of the Central Committee of the Asylum, Dr. De Vitre presided with admirable tact and judgment; and he took the warmest interest in the internal organisation of the institution and in the progress of the patients. As an illustration of his practical liberality, may be mentioned the fact that, finding the erection of some cottages on the estate would be of advantage to the establishment, he himself presented anonymously £2,000 for the purpose.

As a physician, Dr. De Vitre was a shrewd observer and a pleasant consultant. In 1864, he was President of the Lancashire and Cheshire Branch of the British Medical Association; and, in his inaugural address, we find him insisting on the fact "that the oldest of us are only students yet; and in a profession like this we must ever remain students." He had none of that dogmatism which refuses to subject fancied experience to the test of modern scientific research. The esteem in which he was held by his professional brethren was testified by the large attendance at his funeral of the medical practitioners of Lancaster and the surrounding district. Dr. De Vitre twice filled the office of Mayor of Lancaster; he was a magistrate for the county and borough, and Chairman of the Visiting Justices of the County Asylum.

MEDICAL NEWS.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF LONDON.—The following gentlemen were admitted Licentiates on October 31st, 1878.

Ahearn, Joseph, 7, Oakley Square, N.W.
 Burry, Henry Burry Pullen, Sompting, Worthing
 Deare, Edwin Walter, 69, Malpas Road, S.E.
 Gardiner, John Herbert, London Hospital, E.
 Grainger, Edgar Bridden, Guy's Hospital, S.E.
 Howlett, Edmund Henry, King's College Hospital, W.C.
 Smith, Robert Percy, St. Thomas's Hospital, S.E.

The following gentlemen were admitted Members on October 31st.
 Edge, Abraham Matthewson, M.D. Queen's University, Manchester
 Francis, Charles Richard, M.B. London, Sutton, Surrey

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.—The following gentlemen passed their primary examinations in anatomy and physiology at a meeting of the Board of Examiners, on Nov. 5th; and, when eligible, will be admitted to the pass-examination.

Messrs. Luke Teskey, Charles Sheard, and Alfred Edward Olling (students of St. Thomas's Hospital); Owen F. S. Evans (St. George's Hospital); Jas. Marshall (University College); Arthur Kidd (London Hospital); Wm. C. Milward and Robert P. Sykes (Edinburgh School); Edward W. W. White (Dublin School); James Wilson (Belfast School); Thos. Breese (Aberdeen School); James H. Kisley (Manchester School); and John G. Marshall (Cambridge School).

The following gentlemen passed the examinations in anatomy and physiology on Nov. 6th.

Messrs. Frederick W. Clifton and Wm. Mill (students of St. Mary's Hospital); William J. Pook and Francis J. Pound (London Hospital); R. Wyndham Winstanley (University College); Francis W. E. Kinneir (St. Bartholomew's Hospital); Alexander Hill (Cambridge School); and George W. Steeves (Liverpool School).

Eighteen candidates out of the thirty-nine examined, having failed to acquit themselves to the satisfaction of the Board, were referred to their anatomical and physiological studies for three months.—The pass-examination for the diploma of membership was commenced yesterday, November 8th.

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY IN IRELAND.—At the annual meeting of the Senate for the conferring of Degrees, held in St. Patrick's Hall, Dublin Castle, on Friday, October 11th, 1878, the following degrees in Medicine and Surgery, and Diplomas in Midwifery, were conferred by His Grace the Duke of Leinster, Chancellor of the University.

The Degree of Doctor in Medicine.—First Honorary Class—James H. Gibson, Belfast; Lysander Maybury, Galway; G. Yelverton Pearson, Cork. Second

Honour Class—John W. Byers, M.A., Belfast; Isaac C. M'Learn, Belfast; James Young, Belfast. Upper Pass Division—Edward Little, Belfast; Stephen Little, Belfast; John F. Tuohy, Cork; Wm. Whitford, Belfast. Lower Pass Division—T. Geiston Atkins, B.A., Cork; Theophilus Bacon, Galway; Henry Bingham, Belfast; Daniel Burdon, Cork; James P. Hanrahan, Cork; John J. Hartnett, Cork; William R. Henderson, Belfast; Richard Jennings, Cork; John Read Johnston, Belfast; Alfred Henry Keogh, Galway; Andrew T. Love, B.A., Belfast; B. P. Sarsfield M'Dermott, Galway; John M'Kinlay, Galway; Wm. M'Namara, Galway; Edward Magner, Cork; Thos. H. May, Belfast; Daniel Riordan, Galway; Wm. Rowney, Belfast; Wm. Smyth, Belfast; James Steel, Belfast; Wm. Stokes, Galway; Ralph Worrall, Belfast; Charles Warke Allison, B.A., Belfast; Alfred Constantine Bennett, Cork; John Thomas Collier, Belfast; Patrick Oswald Considine, Belfast; William Fleck, Belfast; Alfred Osmond Geoghegan, Galway; Robert Evans Hadden, Cork; Charles Hall, Belfast; J. Courtney Haslett, Belfast; Francis Thomas Henston, Galway; Charles Kevin, Belfast; Pershouse Wm. L. Langley, Belfast; Joshua Lytle, Belfast; Daniel Roderick O'Connor, Cork; James Wigmore, Cork.

The Degree of Master in Surgery.—John Courtney Haslett, M.D., Belfast; T. Geiston Atkins, B.A., Cork; Theophilus Bacon, Galway; Daniel Burdon, Cork; John Wm. Byers, M.A., Belfast; James Hill Gilson, Belfast; James P. Hanrahan, Cork; John Joseph Hartnett, Cork; Wm. Robert Henderson, Belfast; Richard Jennings, Cork; John Reid Johnston, Belfast; Alfred Henry Keogh, Galway; Edward Little, Belfast; Stephen Little, Belfast; Andrew Thomas Lowe, B.A., Belfast; Brien P. Sarsfield M'Dermott, Galway; Isaac Crawford M'Learn, Belfast; Wm. MacNamara, B.A., Galway; Edward Magner, Cork; Lysander Maybury, Galway; C. Yelverton Pearson, Cork; Wm. Rowney, Belfast; Wm. Whitford, Belfast; Jas. Young, Belfast; Patrick Maurice Carleton, M.D., Belfast; Isaac C. Dundee, M.D., Galway; J. Martin Kennedy, M.D., Belfast; Alfred C. Bennett, Cork; Wm. Fleck, Belfast; Robert Evans Hadden, Cork; Francis Thomas Houston, Galway; Charles Kevin, Belfast; Pershouse W. Langley, Belfast; Joshua Lytle, Belfast; Daniel Roderick O'Connor, Cork.

The Diploma in Midwifery.—Thomas Geiston Atkins, B.A., Cork; Daniel Fegan, M.D., Belfast; Richard Jennings, Cork; Alfred H. Keogh, Galway; Edward Little, Belfast; Stephen Little, Belfast; John M'Kinlay, Galway; Lysander Maybury, Galway; Thomas O'Sullivan, M.D., Galway; C. Yelverton Pearson, Cork; Wm. Smyth, Belfast; John F. Tuohy, Cork; Wm. Whitford, Belfast; Alfred C. Bennett, Cork; John Thomas Collier, Belfast; Robt. Evans Hadden, Cork; Charles Kevin, Belfast; J. Fritz Beck, M.A., M.D., Belfast.

Peel Exhibitions awarded at the First University Examination in Medicine—Thomas Sinclair, Belfast, 1st, £20 a year for two years; Havellock, H. R. Charles, Cork, 2nd, £15 a year for two years.

The Chancellor announced that the number of students reported as having attended the Queen's Colleges of Belfast, Cork, and Galway during the past Academic year was 886, compared with 844 in the previous year.

In the Faculty of Medicine, 77 candidates had sought the degree of Doctor in Medicine, and of these 47 had satisfied the severe requirements of the examiners; 35 candidates out of 65 had passed for the degree of Master in Surgery, and 15 out of 45 had been deemed qualified for the diploma in Midwifery; 161 candidates presented themselves at the second University Examination in Medicine, of whom 100 had satisfied the examiners; and in one case the answering of the candidate—Mr. Cotter—in Anatomy and Physiology, was so exceptionally good that it was specially reported to the Senate by his examiners: 139 candidates out of 187 had been successful at the first examination in the same Faculty.

MEDICAL VACANCIES.

The following vacancies are announced:—

CENTRAL LONDON OPHTHALMIC HOSPITAL—Assistant-Surgeon. Applications on or before the 6th instant.

EAST SUFFOLK HOSPITAL, Ipswich.—House-Surgeon. Salary, £100 per annum, with board, lodging, and washing. Applications to be made on or before the 27th instant.

HULL BOROUGH ASYLUM—Medical Superintendent. Salary, £350 per annum, with house, coals and fuel, gas, washing, and vegetables. Applications on or before the 16th instant.

HULL GENERAL INFIRMARY—Honorary Physician.

MANCHESTER ROYAL INFIRMARY—Pathological Registrar. Salary, £100 per annum. Applications to be made on or before the 18th instant.

ROYAL BERKS HOSPITAL, Reading—Assistant House-Surgeon.

SOMERSET COUNTY LUNATIC ASYLUM—Assistant Medical Officer. Salary, £120 per annum, with board, residence, and washing.

WANDSWORTH AND CLAPHAM UNION—Resident Medical Superintendent of Infirmary and Medical Officer of Workhouse. Salary, £400 per annum, with unfurnished residence, without coals and gas.—Assistant Medical Officer. Salary, £120 per annum, with furnished apartments, rations, and washing.

WESTMINSTER HOSPITAL—Resident Obstetric Assistant. Applications not later than November 16th.

YORK COUNTY HOSPITAL—House-Surgeon. Salary, £100, with board and lodging. Applications to be made on or before the 23rd instant.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, AND DEATHS.

The charge for inserting announcements of Births, Marriages, and Deaths, is 3s. 6d., which should be forwarded in stamps with the announcement.

BIRTH.

WEATHERLEY.—On October 26th, at Portishead, Somerset, the wife of *Lionel A. Weatherley, M.D., of a daughter.